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Unwelcome Visitors to Early Washington*.

August 24, 1814.

Eighty years have now rolled away since the report of the British invasion of the infant capital filled the country with a burning indignation against the culpable inefficiency of the persons intrusted with its defense. Immediately party differences vanished; the national honor being at stake, every one rallied to the support of the Government, eagerly anxious to efface the disgrace heaped upon the country and avenge the vandalism committed by the enemy. American manhood responded at once to the call, soon redeeming the disaster of that fatal August day by the brilliant victories of September 10, 1814, at Baltimore, and January 8, 1815, before New Orleans. Condemned by the whole civilized world, this wanton use of the torch can never be forgotten nor condoned; it ever remains a stigma on England's fame. The story of the capture has often been told, especially by Edward D. Ingraham in 1849 (who sought to palliate General Winder's errors), followed by John S. Williams' vivid account in 1856, describing in detail the official acts that preceded this eventful affair, while Lieut. George R. Gleig in his narrative (2d edition, London, in 1826) speaks gloatingly as an invader of the stirring occurrences at Washington, Baltimore, and New Orleans. With these standard histories we are all familiar, but the graphic recital by Dr James Ewell, at that period the leading physician of Washington, of the British occupation of our city is probably unknown to the majority of our citizens.

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*The Committee on Publications deem it proper to state that in the case of the present paper they have made an exception to the general rule that only original contributions are published. This is done on account of the interest of the subject, and because of the rarity at the present day of the work of Dr Ewell, of which this contemporary record forms a part.

In the belief that it is in every sense worthy of being saved from oblivion as an interesting contribution to historical truth, I submit for your information extracts taken from what he called "a concise and impartial history of the capture of Washington," by a melancholy spectator of that awful tragedy. Dr Ewell possessed ample facilities to acquire the knowledge of all these facts, owing to the circumstance that his own residence, in a prominent site, located at the northeast corner of First and A streets southeast (lot 12, in square 729), facing the Capitol square, was the identical place selected by the commander of the British forces, Gen. Robert Ross, as his headquarters. (This square is now included in the grounds of the new Congressional Library building.) Dr Ewell's dwelling was presumably one of the most attractive on Capitol Hill, being the corner of the block of five houses known as Carroll row, owned by Daniel Carroll, of Duddington. It contained four stories, surmounted by a pitched roof. A flight of four broad stone steps led up to the massive front entrance, the door of which was adorned by a ponderous iron knocker that aroused the neighborhood when raised by some impatient caller in need of the always popular doctor. But now, having introduced the gentleman, I will permit him to unfold the story of his own experiences:

The 24th of August, 1814—that dark and dismal day! the darkest and most dismal of all in the American calendar, which threw such a gloom over the rising glories of my country!

But a short time before that awful tragedy I was congratulating myself—so little do we know what is before us—as being happily situated in a city founded by the great Washington himself and called after his name—a city where liberal nature had done so much and where art and population alone were requisite to erect an emporium that should vie with the noblest cities of the ancient world and through time immemorial display the grandeur of its high original.

But a few days, I say, before this I was indulging a train of thoughts so pleasing to the patriotic bosom, when I heard that the British squadron in the Chesapeake bay, having received a reinforcement, had landed a small army at Benedict, on the river Patuxent. Many of my neighbors appeared to be much alarmed that the enemy should be so near; but, for myself, I can truly say that my bosom was never more entirely a stranger to panic than at that season; for I was firmly persuaded that the enemy could have no other object in view than the destruction of our flotilla, which, unfortunately, had been chased, some weeks before, up the Patuxent. I could not for a moment suppose it possible that he would have had the temerity to approach this place, particularly after giving so long notice of the arrival of the van of Admiral Cockburn's fleet, which was about the middle of July, and it was very natural for them to expect our Government would adopt the necessary precaution of having a force competent at least to prevent the destruction of our city.*

What! to make an attack on Washington, the metropolis of the United States, and in the interior, too, fifty miles from their shipping, with woods and forests enough between to give our marksmen an opportunity to cut off ten times their number! Under these circumstances, will they ever dream of attacking Washington? No, never! With far better chance they attacked Fort Stevenson, and also Sackett's Harbor and Fort Erie, but the gallant Croghan, Brown, Backus, Scott, Gaines, Ripley, Towson, etc, soon gave them

* The city of Washington contained in 1814 about 2,000 houses, mostly in scattered settlements. The population was estimated at—

City	10,000
County	2,500
Georgetown	6,000
Alexandria (city and county)	9,500
Total	28,000

in the District of Columbia, including the 1,800 slaves and 1,700 free colored persons.

cause to repent of their temerity. And will they now dare invade the city of Washington, with such an immense population between and such large cities to aid, and the President, Mr Monroe, General Armstrong, Captain Jones, and General Winder to protect? Such was my reasoning, and a very fair way of reasoning, too, I thought: and I was encouraged in this belief by learning that the President and his Cabinet were in high spirits, and that General Winder, with only a small detachment of his army, under the command of the gallant Major Peter, of Georgetown, had held the enemy in check for a day or two.

But, behold! on the evening of the 23d General Winder retreated precipitately to Washington. However, I was not still without some consolation, for on the same evening Colonel Minor, with his regiment from Virginia, arrived in the city a little after sunset. Immediately on his arrival he requested me to present him to the President, which I did, as I also did my worthy schoolmate, Dr Peake, surgeon of the regiment.

We had not long been seated before the President observed that Colonel Minor ought to have reported himself to the Secretary of War; consequently we hastened to the lodgings of General Armstrong. After Colonel Minor had held a short interview with the Secretary, he returned with me to my house. On the way, instead of animating my hopes, he became, as it were, Job's comforter, observing—such was the astonishing indifference manifested on this occasion—that he felt no hesitation to declare it as his opinion that the city would be sacrificed. Instead of being immediately supplied with arms and ammunition, he was, it seems, instructed to make his men put in order the few guns which they had brought with them, and in the morning to report himself to Colonel Carbery, who would furnish additional arms. Early next morning Colonel Minor made application for the arms, but was informed Colonel Carbery had gone out to his country-seat the evening before. After several hours spent in most painful waiting for

his return, Colonel Minor was authorized by General Winder to get the arms by any means. About this time Colonel Carbery rode up; but, behold! another cause of delay was presented. The arms were dealt out at last, but without flints, and, instead of throwing them out by handfuls, they were actually counted out, one by one, as carefully as if they had been so many guineas; and it is a fact that after counting out a considerable number the man employed in this economizing business, fearing he had miscounted, insisted upon counting them over again.

Thus was our Republic, at this awful crisis, deprived of the services of Colonel Minor and his regiment; for, in consequence of the above shameful delay, they were not able to join the army before the retreat.

Receiving good information that the enemy was in rapid march for Bladensburg, General Winder, then lying near the Eastern Branch bridge, moved on to meet him there, where General Stansbury, with his brigade from Baltimore, was stationed.

The reader will observe that Bladensburg is a small village, about five miles from the capital, on the Anacostia or Eastern branch, where it is narrowed to a creek, which is passed on a bridge and is everywhere above fordable. The village lies on the east side of this creek. On the west is a fine rising ground, with fences and bushes, favorable to an invaded force of good marksmen, besides a small breastwork which was hastily cast up. This spot Generals Winder and Stansbury fixed on to receive the enemy, who, about twelve o'clock, came in full view on the hills of Bladensburg, and very soon afterwards the battle commenced.

The enemy, finding on getting near the bridge he should have to pass a defile between the creek and marsh in front of our battery, instantly displayed a heavy column to the right and passed the ford higher up the creek. This judicious movement, by depriving our men of the promised advantages of their battery, as also presenting an appearance of an attempt to surround them, excited their alarm and

despondence. The British, having but one or two six-pounders and knowing that the whole success of the expedition depended on carrying everything with a "coup de main," pushed on with a rapidity and firmness which raw troops were not to have been expected to resist, and consequently a general rout of the militia ensued.

That the enemy would have met with a very different reception had our troops been in a tolerable state of preparation is evident from the following fact: The gallant Barney, Martin, and their brave comrades, of the flotilla, and Miller, Sevier, and Grayson, of the marine corps, were on the field of battle, but caught nothing of the epidemic fright. On the contrary, eager to stop the progress of the enemy, they came up in a trot, opening at the same time a destructive fire, which made hideous lanes through the British columns; but these columns were familiar with the ravages of death, and, fighting under the eye of Ross and headed by Thornton, Wood, and Brown, fearlessly filling up the chasms of fate, pushed forward with undaunted courage; but it was not for a few hundred troops to repel the enemy, and at length, overpowered by such vast superiority of numbers, their ammunition wagons retreating and themselves nearly surrounded, they were constrained to retire, leaving their commanding officers, the gallant Barney and Miller, dangerously wounded on the field.

I shall not attempt to describe my feelings during this awful conflict between the enemy and my countrymen. From the frequent advices brought that morning of the approach of the enemy, as also from the general movement of our troops to meet him at Bladensburg, the inhabitants of Washington had been some time in a state of extreme anxiety, expecting every moment the report of the guns that should announce the commencement of the battle.

Between 12 and 1, while with my trembling family in the third story of my house, we beheld the rockets ascending, and soon heard the roar of cannon. When the firing had ceased, my feelings were left in fearful fluctuation, now

fondly hoping that my countrymen had prevailed, then awfully fearing that all was lost. This anguish of suspense was, however, but momentary. I soon discovered the dust beginning to rise above the forests in thick clouds, on whose dark tops, growing larger and larger every minute and rapidly advancing, I read the dismal fate that awaited us. Presently I beheld the unfortunate Secretary of War and suite in full flight, followed by crowds of gentlemen on horse-back, some of whom loudly bawled out as they came on "Fly, fly! the ruffians are at hand! If you cannot get away yourselves, for God's sake send off your wives and daughters, for the ruffians are at hand!"

When I surveyed the extended lines of our infantry and cavalry enveloped in clouds of dust, as if universal nature was in tumultuous motion, all heightened by the fearful apprehension that the horrid scenes exhibited by the enemy in Hampton and Havre de Grace were about to be enacted in Washington, I felt myself palsied with horror, and as if the measure of my distress was not yet full, my wife, standing by my side with looks wild with terror, as though she beheld the enemy in sight, cried out, "Oh! what shall we do? what shall we do? yonder they are coming!" and fell into convulsions, my two daughters shrieking by her side. The reader, especially if he be an affectionate husband, may form some idea of my affliction. I shall not attempt to describe it.

Supposing now that the tragedy of destruction was about to commence, and finding it impossible to obtain even a cart to remove my family to the country, I took my wife and two daughters, a little before sunset, and, leaving my house and property in the hands of servants, went to the house of a sick lady. Although Mrs Orr, the lady whom I allude to, did not live more than a hundred yards from my house, I considered it a place of greater safety, as her extreme ill state of health would doubtless have protected her, even had the enemy been, as was represented, "ruffians." Moreover, I was induced to go to the house of Mrs Orr in consequence

of her earnest entreaties, as her husband was from home, and some of her servants had run off with the frightened multitude, leaving her in a situation truly distressing.

About twilight the enemy made his appearance in the city, which was announced by the firing of muskets from the house of Mr Sewall,* followed by several volleys from the British. The fire of our men from Mr Sewall's house killed two British soldiers, wounded several, and killed the horse of Major General Ross. The consequence was, this house was immediately set on fire and much valuable furniture consumed with it; and I was informed by some of the British officers that it was a most fortunate thing that Major General Ross was not killed, for in that event it would have been impossible to have restrained the soldiery, who idolized him, from committing the most horrid outrages, both on our city and its inhabitants.

It was not many minutes after the exhibition of this scene before we were presented with the spectacle so much dreaded—a full view of the advance of the British army in the Capitol square. About this time the navy yard was committed to flames by Commodore Tingey, in pursuance of orders from Secretary Jones, and very soon afterwards the British set fire to the Capitol, the President's house, and the War office. The Treasury office shared a similar fate the next morning. The conflagration of these noble and splendid buildings spread a glare over the night that was truly awful. But the conflagration of our large new frigate, nearly ready to launch, and the new sloop-of-war, equipped, with all the adjacent magazines, filled with naval stores, exhibited an appearance still incomparably more terrific.†

* Mr Sewall's house was on the northwest corner of Second street and Maryland avenue northeast.

† The total value of the public property destroyed was about $1,000,000. The Anacostia bridge (Benning's) was burnt by our own army; the Eastern Branch bridge (Pennsylvania avenue) by Captain Creighton, under orders of the Secretary of the Navy, while the Potomac bridge (Long bridge) was set on fire by the British at the city end and by our own forces at the Virginia side.

In common with other men I have drunk of the bitter cup of affliction, but it was reserved for that doleful night to teach me that private misfortune weighs but as the dust in the balance against the far heavier load of public calamity. To behold so great a calamity as this—the Capital of our country seized upon by a small army and all its grand public buildings and ships wrapped in flames—what wonder that it should have filled all hearts with consternation, and even frightened some into convulsions!

Had such a number of troops as military men might have deemed sufficient been timely provided for the defense of the metropolis, and had those troops, in all points well prepared, gone forth and met the enemy in a gallant conflict, the feelings of the nation even under discomfiture would not have been so grievously wounded, "for the victory is of God." But so shamefully was the public interest and honor sported with on this occasion that nothing but the overthrow of the enemy at Niagara, Chippewa, Erie, Sandusky, and New Orleans, together with the brilliant achievements of our infant navy, could ever again elevate the countenance of an American citizen, or enable him to support the spirit and dignity of a man, for when the British, four thousand strong, made their appearance on the hills of Bladensburg, dressed in their crimson uniforms, and began to press on to the charge, our militiamen, about six thousand, generally gave way; and without wonder, for nothing had been done to prepare them for such a conflict.

Raw troops, suddenly brought together and taken, as it were, by surprise, were, as is very natural, seized with consternation. Some of the officers, bewildered, seemed at a loss who should command, the men whom to obey; some were destitute of arms, others of ammunition, and many, by long marching and countermarching, without rest or refreshment, were so broken down that they were not able to sustain such a shock.

But while I lament the causes which led to the discomfiture of the militia in general, I feel it my duty to recognize

those smaller and therefore still more glorious exceptions, the District militia, or at least those who were on the field of battle. So far from their running or retreating in disorder, they generally exhibited every mark of heroism, particularly the volunteer companies, who did not withdraw until ordered the second time to retreat.

I have thought it a duty I owe my countrymen thus to dwell on this disastrous affair as furnishing an instructive lesson, at any rate, to all future Secretaries of War. I must confess, however, that I find much comfort in the belief that no disaster of this sort is to be apprehended while the office continues to be filled by the Hon. William H. Crawford, whose talents and virtues are so highly and deservedly appreciated.

How an undisciplined militia under such distressing circumstances as above related will behave on any future occasion may be awfully inferred from their behavior in the past. Soon as the enemy began to throw his rockets many of the raw militiamen, at sight of these strange shooting stars, as they were ascending, roared out, "See, see! There they go, there they go!" But when the rockets were seen descending in a direction towards themselves they loudly bawled out again, "No; here they come, here they come!" and, dropping their guns, fled like frightened sheep in every direction, except, indeed, towards the enemy.

A gentleman, a short distance beyond Bladensburg, hearing the report of the cannon, immediately rode towards the field of battle, but before he had gone far he met several companies of the militia in full flight. "What!" says he, "soldiers, you are not running?" "Oh, no!" exclaimed one of them: "we have done our duty; our ammunition is spent. We gave it to them, boys, didn't we?" "Yes," returned his companions; "we peppered the rascals; we strewed the d—d redcoats, and if the others will only do their duty, not one of them will ever get back to their vessels." The gentleman, suspecting their poltroonism and obtaining by strategem a

peep into their cartridge-boxes, found they were full, except the single cartridge with which their guns were loaded.

Another anecdote and I have done. A militia officer making his retreat attempted by way of a short cut to cross a deep, oozy marsh, which presently stopped both himself and his horse. In endeavoring to extricate himself he received a small scratch, which made him bawl out, "I am wounded! I am mortally wounded!" Some of the soldiers, supposing from his cries that the British were close at their heels, only ran the faster. However, a few, wiping their eyes and not beholding the dazzling redcoats, went to his relief. On examining the back part of his thigh, where he said he had received his mortal wound, they found it to be nothing more than a prick of his own spur.

With such disorderly, panic-struck creatures, who but must commend General Winder for ordering a retreat, not, indeed, to save these fugitives, for they took care to save themselves, but to save the flower of our gallant yeomanry, who were eager for a conflict wherein, at such odds against them, they must certainly have perished, for it was but too plain that our sacred Capitol was doomed to fall.

Never shall I forget my tortured feelings when I beheld that noble edifice wrapt in flames, which, bursting through the windows and mounting far above its summits, with a noise like thunder, filled all the saddened night with a dismal gloom.

To heighten our alarms and those of Mrs Orr, we were suddenly startled by a most tremendous rapping at the door. Soon as the door was opened five or six British soldiers presented themselves, asking very politely for something to eat. Instantly a cold ham, with loaf bread and butter and wine, were set before them, which they partook of, conducting themselves with the utmost good behavior.

Presently I beheld a light in every room in my house, which, with the reflection from the Capitol, then in flames, led me to fear it was on fire. Not having removed any part of my property, and anxious to save at least my medical

library, I communicated my fears to the soldiers who were at supper and solicited their aid. The sergeant observed he could not think it possible my house was on fire, but, at any rate, if I thought so, he and his men were ready to go with me and give all the aid in their power. In a few minutes, however, I found out my mistake by the sudden extinction of the lights, and also by the arrival of my servant, who informed me that my house had been plundered by the British soldiers. While I was standing at the door, the Rev Mr McCormick came up and told me, if I would accompany him, he would introduce me to Major General Ross and Admiral Cockburn, with whom he had been conversing and found them to be "perfect gentlemen." Hoping from this circumstance to derive security to my house and what property remained, I readily accompanied him and was introduced, as he thought, to General Ross, but it was unwittingly to the admiral, who rectified the mistake of the reverend gentleman by saying, in his quick and piercing tone, "My name is Cockburn, sir." I told him I had understood that private property was to be held sacred, and that I placed implicit confidence in the report. He answered that "it would be so deemed." I replied that "some of my furniture, apparel, and plate had been plundered."

"With whom did you confide your property, sir?"

I answered, "With my servants."

"Well, sir, let me tell you it was very ill confidence to repose your property in the care of servants."

In the meantime General Ross came up, to whom I was also introduced. He had just come in time to infer from what Admiral Cockburn had said that my house had been robbed. In a tone that will forever endear him to me as a "perfect gentleman" indeed, he observed he was very sorry to hear that my house had been disturbed, and begged that I would tell him which it was and he would order a sentinel to guard it. We were then standing before my door, the south end of Carroll's row, facing the Capitol.

"This is my house, sir," said I.

With an amiable embarrassment he replied, "Why, sir, this is the house we had pitched on for our headquarters."

I told him "I was glad of it and regretted that he had not taken it earlier, as my property would then have been protected."

He observed he "could never think of trespassing on the repose of a private family, and would order his baggage out of my house immediately."

I earnestly begged he would still consider it as his headquarters.

"Well, sir," said he, "since you are so good as to insist on my staying at your house, I consent; but I will endeavor to give you as little trouble as possible. Any apartment under your roof will suffice me."

I asked him to accompany me and I would show him a room. He assented and I conducted him to my own bedchamber, which was the best furnished in my house, with an uncommonly large mattress on the bed. He refused for some time to accept of it, and insisted I should go and bring Mrs Ewell home, observing that I might depend on it my family should be just as safe as they were the evening before, when the American army was here; "for," continued he, "I am myself a married man, have several sweet children, and venerate the sanctities of the conjugal and domestic relations."

I feel no fear of offending my virtuous countrymen by exhibiting even in an enemy such strokes of refinement and generosity as these. Thank God, such achievements are too congenial with their own spirit and manners not to be read with pleasure.

The commander-in-chief of a victorious army, carrying himself with such consummate modesty and politeness to those whom the fortune of war had placed in his power, is a spectacle too honorable to human nature and too conducive to the general good to give offense.

In all wars there are brutes on both sides, whose savage examples would turn men into demons and war into a

horrid struggle for mutual slaughter and extermination. All are concerned to oppose examples so detestable. Then let all unfurl the counter-examples of those heroic spirits who mourn over the calamities which they are obliged to inflict, and treat the vanquished as brothers. The lovely sight will attract the eyes of all, and while they admire they may imitate. With this fond hope I shall go on occasionally to entertain my readers with such anecdotes of the British officers as may contribute, now that the war is at an end, to rekindle the pleasant flame of former friendship, and lead to the performance of those fraternal acts which will gratify the common parent of us all.

Having thus made a virtue of necessity, and from true policy as well as politeness left my house and furniture in possession of the British general and admiral, I went down to my family at Mrs Orr's.

The next morning, about the hour of breakfast, I returned, and as I approached my house I saw the soldier who was holding the horse of General Ross suddenly fall down in a fit. I hastened to the poor fellow and opened a vein, which gave him immediate relief. While I was attending to him a British sergeant came up at the head of a file of soldiers, one of whom desired me, rather roughly, to give him some water. Without suspecting offense, I called to my servant and ordered him to bring out a pitcher of water.

What meaning the Englishman could have attached to the word pitcher I know not, but, kindling into a violent passion, he exclaimed, "You d—d rebel, do you think I am a beast, to drink out of a pitcher?" At this moment General Ross, who had overheard the insolent language of his soldier, stepped up. The man, greatly abashed, instantly turned his face and seemed as if he would have shrunk among his comrades, but the general, with every mark of displeasure in his countenance, jerking him by the collar, exclaimed, "Villain, is this the way you speak to a gentleman, and in the moment, too, that he is doing a kindness to

a sick fellow-soldier of your own? Sergeant, what sort of a man is this?"

The sergeant, with considerable trepidation, replied, "Why, sir, he is a pretty good sort of a man, I believe, sir."

"A pretty good sort of a man, sir?" replied the general; "a pretty good sort of a man, to speak to a gentleman in this style! Very well, sir; this conduct shall not pass unnoticed."

He then turned to me, and after thanking me for my "goodness," as he called it, to his fainting soldier, observed that in all armies there were some scoundrels to be found, and that he was sorry to say that there were too many of that description in his army.

Some time after this, Mrs Ewell and my daughters came to Mrs McCardell's, next door to my house. As soon as Captain Palmer, who had been in her company at Mrs Orr's, saw her coming, he moved on with General Ross to meet her and very politely introduced her to him. The general shook her hand with every mark of undissembled friendship; expressed his deep regret to learn that she had been so seriously frightened, and lamented sincerely the necessity that had given cause to these tragedies, namely, the burning of the British capital in Canada. Had the capital of Canada been burnt with the approbation of our Government, there might have been some apology for the shameful destruction of our noble buildings, but I am happy in the belief that though this was the impression of General Ross, it was not an act of the Government.

Mrs Ewell, sensible of such unexpected attentions, made every acknowledgment that her confusion would permit and endeavored to relax her melancholy into a smile, but it was evidently an act of constraint. Grief was too deeply seated to be thus easily banished from her cheeks, which still wore the marks of tears and fright, and which evidently excited the tenderest sympathies of General Ross as well as of the other officers.

Mrs Ewell was but a short time at Mrs McCardell's

before Admiral Cockburn paid his respects to her, and in his apparently rough way asked, "Pray, madam, what could have alarmed you so? Did you take us for savages?" Her confusion preventing her from making a reply, he added, "Ay, madam, I can easily account for your terror. I see from the files in your house that you are fond of reading those papers which delight to make devils of us." It is but justice to Admiral Cockburn to declare that he frequently came to Mrs. McCardell's, making inquiries about the state of Mrs Ewell's spirits and endeavoring to console her.

On my observing to General Ross that it was a great pity the elegant library had been burnt with the Capitol, he replied, with much concern, "I lament most sincerely I was not apprized of the circumstance, for had I known it in time the books would most certainly have been saved."

"Neither do I suppose, general," said I, "you would have burnt the President's house had Mrs Madison remained at home."

"No, sir," replied he; "I make war neither against letters nor ladies, and I have heard so much in praise of Mrs Madison that I would rather protect than burn a house which sheltered such an excellent lady."

The saying that "brave men are always generous" was signally illustrated in the pleasure that General Ross manifested in praising Commodore Barney for his behavior in the battle of Bladensburg.

"A brave officer, sir," said he. "He had only a handful of men with him, and yet he gave us a very severe shock. I am sorry he was wounded. However, I immediately gave him a parole and I hope he will do well. Had half your army," continued he, "been composed of such men as the commodore commanded, with the advantage you had in choosing your position, we should never have got to your city."

What evidenced more the magnanimity of this officer, he never uttered an expression in my presence against the Presi-

dent or any of the officers of the Government, but often expressed the deepest regret that war had taken place between two nations so nearly allied in consanguinity and interest. I can, moreover, truly say I never saw the sunbeam of one cheerful smile on General Ross all the time he was in Washington. His countenance seemed constantly shrouded in the close shades of a thoughtful mind.

The favorable opinion which the reader has formed of General Ross will not be lessened by the following facts:

The morning after the conflagration a silly man from Ohio, mounted on an elegant horse, came to the British camp. What was his object is to this day a secret; but, at any rate, to guard against the worst the British officers took him up, and would no doubt have been glad to have gotten his horse. For my own part, I was of opinion at first that he was a traitor, and therefore took particular notice of him. Presently an affair happened which served to persuade me that my opinion had been erroneous. Considering it doubtful whether the officers would let him go, he came to the desperate resolution to mount his horse and make his escape, placing his safety on the speed of the animal. He had scarcely started before Major Hamilton, an aid of General Ross, with two or three sergeants, mounted their best horses and went in full pursuit. The hue and cry after him spread like lightning, and few races ever attracted more spectators or made more noise in so short a time. They had not, however, run more than a mile towards the Eastern branch before the horse of the Ohio man fell and by some means or other broke the legs of the rider.

The regret which General Ross expressed at the fate of the poor man indicated a most feeling heart, and he assured me that it was not his intention to have detained the man or his horse longer than the evening. He then ordered the animal to be put in my stable, with a request that I would have him restored to the owner.

The British soldier who was ordered to take the horse to my stable muttered exceedingly that so elegant a horse

should be given up, and as soon as the general had set out with the army the same fellow came back with a lie in his mouth, saying he was ordered by the general to take the horse away. I was at a loss how to act. However, not finding myself out of danger, I delivered him up; but, behold! the next morning Daniel Carroll, Esq., of Duddington, rode to my house and congratulated me that my horse was safe. I told him yes, through the goodness of the commanding officer, my horse was given up to me immediately on making application, and that he then was in my stable.

"Why," said he, with some surprise, "I was instructed by Mr Sewall to inform you that General Ross had left your horse in the care of Captain Gantt."

This amiable officer, it seems, seeing the horse next morning in camp and knowing the history of him, could not rest until he had placed him in the hands of Captain Gantt on the road, with a request that he would deliver him to me, for that I knew how he was to be disposed of.

All generous Americans will doubtless pronounce Major General Ross a magnanimous enemy. Surely the instances already cited prove his claim to that high character, and surely he deserves it who, when told that our barracks, which, according to the usages of war, he had condemned, could not be burnt without injuring private property, immediately countermanded his own order and thus saved to us that noble range of buildings.

As nothing is more pleasing than to meet with instances of generosity in an enemy, I cannot forbear recording some traits of the magnanimous sort in the character of Admiral Cockburn. At this I know some of my readers will startle. "What! magnanimous traits in Admiral Cockburn! Impossible!" To such I beg leave only to say I am about to state facts which came under my own notice, and, as they are honorable to that human nature of which we all partake, I trust they will afford pleasure to every reader who has a soul to enjoy a virtuous action, though in an enemy.

The terror struck into the good people of our city by the

capture and conflagration as aforesaid rolled on in such conglomerating floods to Alexandria that by the time it reached that place it had acquired a swell of mountainous horrors, that appear to have entirely prostrated the spirits of the Alexandrians. Men, women, and children in that defenseless place saw nothing in their frightened fancies but the sudden and total destruction of their rising city by the British army then at Washington and the British squadron, under Captain Gordon, coming up the river.

In this alarming situation they very wisely determined to throw themselves on the generosity of the enemy and supplicate security for their town on the humble conditions of capitulation. As men in time of their troubles seem naturally to look for a blessing through the ministration of the godly, the Alexandrians selected four of their citizens distinguished for piety and morals—as Drs Muir and Dick and Messrs Jonathan Swift and William Swann. They arrived during the dreadful tornado which we experienced on that memorable day, and, as I happened to be sitting in my dining-room with Admiral Cockburn when these delegates presented themselves, I had a fair opportunity to hear every word that passed on this occasion. Soon as they communicated to the admiral the object of their mission he replied, with the brevity that characterized him, "Gentlemen, I have nothing to say until you first tell me whether Captain Gordon is in sight of Alexandria or not."

The reply was that Captain Gordon was not in sight of Alexandria.

"Well, then, gentlemen," continued he, "I am ready to negotiate with you. And now all I have to say is that we want provisions and must have them; but let me tell you that for every article we take you shall be allowed a fair price."

Upon this they very soon retired.

Scarcely had those gentlemen left Admiral Cockburn before one of his officers entered the room and told him that

the bank* could not be burnt without injuring private property.

"Well, then," said he, sternly, "pull it down."

Though I felt somewhat of awe in the presence of this son of Neptune, yet I could not here refrain from interposing for the safety of the bank.

"Admiral Cockburn," said I, "you do not wish to injure private property?" "No," said he, "I do not; but this is public property."

"No, sir," I continued, "the United States have no bank here now; this is altogether private property."

"Are you certain of that," said he. "Yes, sir," I replied, "I pledge my honor it is private property."

"Well, then," said he to the officer, "let it alone."

There was another case in which I had the satisfaction to save the property of a valuable citizen. As I was standing on the pavement near my door, which, as I said, the general and admiral had used as headquarters, a British officer observed in my presence, "Well, we shall be done with burning when the rope-walks are burnt and that handsome building yonder," pointing at the house of my pious and worthy neighbor, Elias B. Caldwell, Esq.

"Why, certainly you are not going to burn that house, Captain," said I. "Yes, sir," replied he, "we shall." "It is not public property," I said. "No matter for that: there is public property at the house," alluding to some cartridges and cartridge-boxes which had been left there; "and besides," continued he, "it belongs to a man who has been very active against us."

"It is true," replied I, "Mr Caldwell is captain of a volunteer company and a brave man; but brave men do not bear malice against each other for doing their duty; on the contrary, respect them the more for it, as General Ross yesterday did Commodore Barney, and therefore I hope that as

* The bank sought to be destroyed was the Bank of Washington, then located on lot 7, square 690, New Jersey avenue southeast, near B street. The original building is still in existence.

this house is private property it will not be destroyed." He paused for a moment, then went to General Ross, who, I suppose, put a stop to it, for the house was not burnt.

I did also what I could to save the rope-walks* of Rev Mr Chalmers, Mr Ringgold, and Mr Heath, but it was in vain, for they observed that they were determined to spare nothing that made in favor of our navy.

I will relate another anecdote of the admiral, and let the reader judge for himself:

On the 25th, in the afternoon, just as the general and admiral, who were standing on the pavement at my door, were notified by their servant that dinner was ready, a dirty-looking woman, stained with blood, came running up and screaming out as she came, "O, I am killed, I am killed! a British sailor has killed me!"

Instantly Admiral Cockburn, with every mark of indignation in his countenance, gave orders for the sailors to be mustered on parade, and that the man whom she designated as the perpetrator of the act should be shot at the Capitol without one moment's delay.

The general and admiral, with their suites, then went up to dinner, leaving Dr Doddy and myself to examine the wounds of the woman, whom we had conveyed to the hospital. On finding this poor wretch, in her drunken delirium, sometimes cursing a British sailor and sometimes an American soldier as her murderer, and was in no condition to designate who had inflicted the wounds, which, after all the noise, were quite fleshy and slight, I requested Dr Doddy to communicate her situation to the admiral, to prevent an innocent person from suffering death on her account. Presently the doctor returned with the compliments of General Ross and Admiral Cockburn, who wished to see me.

I went up and found that they had dined, but the table covered with wine. General Ross, politely bowing and waving

*All the rope-walks were in East Washington.

his hand to a chair that stood by him, invited me to sit down and take a glass of wine with them. Admiral Cockburn, then addressing me, said: "We were determined, sir, to have the British sailor shot who stabbed that poor woman, but it gives us pleasure to learn that it is your opinion her wounds are not mortal. As she has, however, been wounded, and more than probable by one of our men, we think it but just she should be cured at our expense. That part of the business we shall be obliged to confide to you, and for your trouble we beg you to accept of this trifle." Then he reached out to me a parcel of gold—six doubloons.

After thanking him for such generosity I told him he must excuse me from taking so large a fee. "The wounds," said I, "Admiral Cockburn, are altogether flesh wounds, of which she will soon recover; and my attentions to her, even though I was influenced solely by pecuniary considerations, cannot deserve so large a reward."

At that word his face reddened and he exclaimed: "Large, my good sir! We are only mortified to think it is so small, but it is, I assure you, all the specie we have with us. If you will accept a bill on our government, we will make it better worth your services."

I told him I could not accept a bill, for that the fee he now tendered was much too ample. He, however, pressed it on me with an earnestness which I could no longer resist.

Nothing, to be sure, was ever more providential than the receipt of this money. I do not mean for the wounded woman, for she, a common strumpet, being slightly hurt, soon got well without much aid of the admiral's doubloons; but I allude to worthier subjects. I allude to the sick and wounded of the American and British soldiers, who, but for this supply, must—some of them, at least—have inevitably perished; for, to be candid, all my funds were exhausted previous to the conflagration in affording refreshments to my friends and wearied countrymen who needed such hospitalities and who had nobly volunteered their services in the defense of the metropolis.

There was, for example, John Stockton, of the rifle corps, from Baltimore, commanded by the gallant Major Pinkney, who lay very desperately wounded for two days on the field of battle. By mere accident hearing of his situation, I pressed a cider cart from the country and had him brought in, extracted the ball, dressed his wounds, which were assuming a gangrenous state, and plentifully supplied him for several weeks with the best nourishment from my table. Thus was this worthy soldier snatched from the yawning grave.

There were also forty-seven of the British soldiers who were most miserably mangled by the terrible explosion at Greenleaf's point, the greater part of whom would certainly have perished, as the Government made no provision for them until after the third day, had it not been for the admiral's gold, which, by immediate transmutation into sugar, coffee, tea, milk, rice, arrow-root, bread, meats, vegetables, and fruits, was early applied to sustain their exhausted frames.

It may gratify the generous reader on more accounts than one to hear the tragical history of that affair. About 2 o'clock on the 25th a British captain, with a company of soldiers, marched down on Greenleaf's point to destroy the powder magazine. On reaching the spot they found the magazine empty, the powder the day before having been taken out and thrown into a dry well. The British, being strangers to this fact, threw a lighted match into the well. A most tremendous explosion ensued, whereby the officers and about thirty of the men were killed and the rest most shockingly mangled. Some of these unfortunate victims of gunpowder were seen flying in the air to great distances, and others were totally buried alive under tons of earth thrown upon them. The survivors were carefully brought up on the Capitol hill, and those in the most distressed situation were lodged in Carroll's buildings, adjoining my house.

I never saw more endearing marks of sympathy than were

here exhibited on the countenance of General Ross. He observed, looking at me with an eye of searching anxiety, "I am much distressed at leaving these poor fellows behind me. I do not know who is to mitigate their sufferings."

I understood his meaning, and instantly assured him that he need not make himself uneasy on account of his wounded soldiers. "The Americans, General Ross," said I, "are of the same origin as yourself. We have, I trust, given you many splendid instances of our humanity in the course of this unfortunate war: and you may rely on it, sir, no attentions in my power shall be withheld from them." He gave me a look of gratitude which I shall never forget, and then turning towards his men where they lay, burnt, bruised, and mangled, on the floor, he silently gazed at their deplorable state with that God-like sensibility, near melting into tears, which strongly brought to my recollection these beautiful lines of Darwin:

> No radiant pearl which crested Fortune wears,
> No gem that twinkling hangs from Beauty's eyes,
> Not the bright stars which night's blue arch adorn,
> Nor rising sun that gilds the vernal morn,
> Shine with such luster as the tear that breaks
> For other's woe down Virtue's manly cheeks.

After a few moments spent in silent sympathy he observed, "I presume mattreses and suitable refreshments can be obtained for them in Georgetown." From this I was induced to believe he intended to march in that direction for the purpose of destroying Mr Foxall's foundry; but in this I was agreeably mistaken, for as soon as night approached and large fires were kindled along their lines the enemy decamped and returned to their shipping by the same route in which they came.

As General Ross was about to mount his horse he took leave of me in a respectful manner; repeated his regret for the robbery committed on my property by his men, and assured me that for those injuries, as also for the services I

had promised his sick and wounded men he left behind him, I should be rewarded.

Very early the next morning I set myself to the performance of what I owed to the sick. All the refreshments that the utmost cleanliness of both bed and board could yield, all the vigor and spirits that nourishing diet could impart, and all the relief that suitable medicines could afford, were plentifully supplied to those unfortunate sufferers, and with the assistance of Dr William Baker, of Georgetown, who generously volunteered his services, the fractured limbs and wounds were set and dressed, to their exceeding comfort, by the evening.

After a few days Dr Baker and myself were notified by Dr Worthington that he was appointed by the Government to take charge of the British prisoners. I expressed much surprise that an arrangement of this sort had been made with so little regard for my feelings, since I had been all along attending those unfortunate sufferers, and had, through a kind Providence, rendered them those services without which, it is well known, many of them must have inevitably perished. I also observed that after my solemn promise made to General Ross I should never forgive myself if I abandoned his men.

Dr Worthington replied that the affair might be easily accommodated, for, as he was appointed to superintend the hospital at Bladensburg as well as this in Washington, making together a sum of duties more than he could discharge, he would be glad of my assistance.

In this way the British sick still continued the objects of my medical attention, and, I am most happy to add, so signal were the smiles of Providence on my exertions in their behalf that, although the bilious fever and dysentery raged in the hospital and encampments with a violence that swept off numbers of my own countrymen, yet not one of the British sank under their affliction except Dr Monteith.

This extraordinary success is to be ascribed, I shall ever think, as much to moral as to medical cause. Cleanliness,

fresh air, and pleasant restorative diet contributed much, no doubt, to that desirable event, but not more, I firmly believe, than did the continued efforts that were made to keep up the spirits of my patients and to render their minds habitually cheerful. Apprehensive that the recollection of being our prisoners might give that morbid irritability to their minds which by destroying the spirits would retard the cure, I studiously avoided everything of that malignant tendency, and as diligently redoubled my efforts to gratify as far as I was able their wishes and to anticipate their wants.

Had General Ross but lived I am confident I should have been liberally remunerated for the articles which were taken from my house, as well as for my medical attentions to his men and for the supplies over and above the allowance made by my own Government; but should I never receive a cent from the British government, I am not left without reward. The recollection of having done unto these afflicted foreigners as I would they had done unto me is a source of the liveliest satisfaction to me as a man, besides what I enjoy as an American, on comparing my conduct with that of Captain Shortland, of Dartmoor prison; General Procter, of the army in Upper Canada, as also Colonel Elliot, who, after having pledged himself to protect his wounded prisoner, Captain Hart, an old and intimate acquaintance of his, and brother-in-law of those distinguished characters the Honorable H. Clay and James Brown, suffered him to be inhumanly butchered by the Indian tomahawk.

But sorry am I to add that for my kindness to the British prisoners I got no thanks from some of my neighbors. On the contrary, a few of them, at least, were so enraged against me that they branded me as a TRAITOR AND A FRIEND TO THE BRITISH! And, indeed, I have no doubt had these unthinking people but possessed a power equal to their passions they would have acted in this fair city of Washington the same horrid tragedies as did the blind mob in Paris

under Robespierre and Marat, and have made me the bloody victim of their diabolical rage and fury. But I am truly happy to state that these men were not Americans. No, they were emigrants, and, which is astonishing, they were the very countrymen of those wounded prisoners to whom I afforded that aid which man owes to the unfortunate.

The truth is, these men finding, on their return from flight before the British army, their houses had been plundered of a few articles, fell into such a rage that they were instantly for blowing up the British prisoners and hanging me for having treated them with the tenderness which their condition as sick and wounded prisoners required.

Thank God, these inconsiderate men were among a people who would give them no countenance in such diabolical acts. They were surrounded by charitable Americans, who, with the most tenacious regard to their own rights, cherished an equal regard to the rights of others, and therefore hold in proper detestation those infernal mobs that would swallow up the rights of all and convert society into the greatest of curses.

I have much pleasure in contemplating the contrast exhibited in the spirit and conduct of that estimable and faithful disciple of Christ, the Reverend Mr Brackenridge, who, although a great sufferer by the British in Washington, was among the first to afford comforts and consolations to the wounded and otherwise afflicted prisoners. He prayed among enemies!

Yes, I rejoice to state that my virtuous countrymen were not implicated with those unthinking men. So far from menacing me for an act of mercy, which man eternally owes to man, they most heartily applauded me for it, and if I could possibly require any greater pleasure than that which I feel when I think of what I did for those poor sick strangers I should find it in the commendations bestowed on me not only by my worthy countrymen who are denominated Federalists, but also by the Republicans, and those especially whose esteem I most highly prized, as Charles

Carroll, Esq, of Bellvue; John Graham, Esq; General Van Ness, Colonel Brent, Dr Thornton, the Rev Mr Chalmers, Mr McKenny, the Honorable G. W. Campbell, Gaillard, Cheves, Lowndes, Troup, Cuthbert, Eppes, Jackson, Gholson, Hawes, Condict, McKim, Ringgold, Desha, Chappel, &c., &c.

When these worthy patriots understood that I had visited those afflicted captives and rendered them aid before the hand of government had been extended to their relief, they expressed their high approbation of my conduct, and several of them came to my house and thanked me for an act so honorable to the character of the American people, and, above all, so pleasing to God, and therefore so sure to draw after it his blessing; and I am happy to add that his blessing in one goodly shape at least was soon visited upon us for this kindness to the British prisoners and through the medium of their gratitude.

Finding that instead of having been treated, as they expected, with great harshness for burning our Capitol, they had been treated with the utmost tenderness and hospitality, they were struck with admiration of our goodness to them. Not only their language but their looks afforded us daily the most pleasing assurances of their gratitude, and as soon as their health would allow they appeared as never so happy as when they were doing something to requite us as far as they were able.

To their great credit, I can say with truth that in some laudable degree this amiable spirit appeared to belong to most of them; but in some it was more especially and gloriously predominant. There were, for example, Sergeant Hutchinson, of the royal sappers and miners, and Alexander Gunn, of the Scotch fusiliers. Those two young men, though low in rank, should stand forever on the list of that virtuous fame which belongs to sensible and grateful dispositions. They acted as though they could never give proof enough of their love for the Americans, and it is a sacred truth that when the American soldiers shrunk, as was sometimes the

case, from their sick and dying comrades through fear of the infection, these English soldiers volunteered their services, sat up with the sick, washed the bodies of the dead, and performed all of the last sad offices of humanity with as much tenderness as though the deceased had been their own relatives and friends; and it is but justice to these Englishmen to declare that to their favorable reports of our kindness to them on this occasion were to be ascribed many noble instances of British politeness to our worthy citizens who fell into their hands.

That very amiable gentleman and distinguished physician, Dr Beans, of Marlborough, was made prisoner by the British as they were retreating to their vessels. The benevolent Francis Scott Key, Esq, of Georgetown, learning this, immediately obtained letters from Sergeant Hutchinson and others of the prisoners, and went with a flag on board the British squadron for his release. Soon as General Ross had perused the letter of Sergeant Hutchinson, detailing the generous treatment which he and his comrades had received, he issued orders for the immediate liberation of Dr Beans, although it had been previously determined that he should be sent to Bermuda. Thus by common acts of Christian charity to these poor captives a most valuable life was saved to his family and country.

Who does not in this behold another additional proof that the maddest policy on earth is REVENGE, and that the wisest philosophy under HEAVEN is that which teaches us "to love our enemies and do good for evil!" And besides its exceeding pleasure and advantage, where is the charm out of HEAVEN that so fascinates all hearts as that of God-like generosity to an enemy that is in our power? Take the following, which was communicated to me by Commodore Barney himself:

As this gallant officer lay on the battle ground, badly wounded and helpless, and his men by his own order all retreated from him, he beckoned to an English soldier to come to his assistance. The soldier instantly stepped up

and rendered the required service with as amiable an alacrity as to his own general. "You are a noble fellow!" said the commodore, "and I am sorry I have not a purse for you. But here's my gold watch; you are welcome to it."

"No, sir," replied the Englishman; "I can assist a brave man without being paid for it."

As I have somehow or other got into a string of anecdotes about the British exploits in Washington, I beg leave to mention one or two more. As Admiral Cockburn was looking at his men while they were throwing into the streets the types of the *National Intelligencer*, an American gentleman observed to him, "If General Washington had been alive, you would not have gotten into this city so easily." "No, sir," replied the admiral, "if General Washington had been President, we should never have thought of coming here."

When this was told me, I added: "No, sir; nor if even the chairman of the military committee had been Secretary of War would they have dared it." The chairman I allude to was the patriotic G. M. Troup, of Georgia, who was always for carrying on the war with the greatest energy, and who would at least have had a sufficient force, with an experienced commander, to defend the metropolis of the United States against an invading army of four thousand men.

As I have mentioned the name of Troup, I cannot forbear relating the following anecdote of this virtuous patriot. Besides the honor it does him, it is calculated to exalt the charm of that stern Spartan virtue which alone can give immortality to our Republic.

The colonel's younger brother, Dr James Troup, studied physic with me in Savannah, and while his uncommon talents excited my admiration, his gentle and affectionate spirit conciliated my esteem in the highest degree. At my request the Hon Paul Hamilton, formerly Secretary of the Navy, appointed him hospital surgeon for the State of Georgia during the war.

Colonel Troup, on learning from me that I had obtained

this commission for his brother, replied, with a look of strong disapprobation: "No, Doctor, it will not do. I thank you for your good wishes to my brother, but, sir, he must not accept the commission you have been so good as to procure for him. I know," continued he, "it is an appointment both of honor and profit, but still I can never consent to his taking it. It may be thought that I procured it for him, and I cannot bear the idea of using any influence that I may ever gain under Government to raise my relations into office."

After this long, though I hope not uninteresting digression, we will return to the bilious fever.

I have stated that Dr Monteith was the only victim of this disease among the British prisoners in the hospital here. Would to God there had perished but one in the American hospitals and encampments.

But, alas! my heart bleeds when I think how many thousands perished during this war. I do not mean the common hireling soldiery, who, destitute of all virtuous habits, are perhaps the fit victims of war. No: but I speak of the thousands of our virtuous yeomanry who, diseased or wounded in their country's service, have been cruelly sacrificed at the shrine of public neglect.

Think now of the following, which is but a common case: A regiment of brave patriots, notwithstanding the tears of wives, mothers, and sisters, set out full of spirits and eager to meet the enemy of their country.

Many of them had never, perhaps, walked ten miles in a day; are hurried on by an imprudent officer twenty or thirty miles, possibly, on the first day, with a heavy musket and knapsack on their shoulders. In the evening, broke down with unusual fatigue and their linen stiff with acrid perspiration, they halt for the night. Both in mind and body they require something to exhilarate and to strengthen, but, behold! in lieu of those refreshments which they had been accustomed to at home, only a little raw meat is offered for their bill of fare, and the cold earth, frequently without a tent, for their bed. What wonder that one fourth or fifth

of this regiment should the very next morning be laid up merely for lack of those provisions which certainly it was the duty of some officer or other under the Government to have supplied!

I have it from a gentleman who was on the spot that of a fine regiment of Virginia volunteers encamping precisely under these circumstances, near Snowden's iron works, upwards of two hundred were the next day on the sick list, several of whom died.

And there, for another example, were the five thousand who, according to the proverb of "locking the stable-door after the steed is stolen," were rapidly marched to Washington after the city was taken; after the Capitol, the President's house, War and Treasury offices were all burnt; after the navy yard and frigates were all demolished, and after the bridges were all burnt up—I say of those five thousand men what awful numbers perished miserably, merely for lack of proper nourishment, medical attention, and suitable accommodation.

True it is, by order of the then acting Secretary of War a hospital was established here for the accommodation of the sick militia, but let not the reader lie under a mistake about this hospital. The word hospital signifies not only a receptacle for the sick, but a place for everything clean and sweet, and everything nourishing and healing, with skillful physicians and attentive nurses; but! alas, this hospital had no such meaning, the truth of which many members of Congress and citizens can attest.

The hospital was contiguous to the apartments occupied by the British sick whom I attended, and being frequently entreated by my countrymen who were not under my care to prescribe for them, I had a fair opportunity to witness their wretched situation, and I will declare before my God I have seen twenty or thirty sick militiamen brought in of a day to this hospital, where instead of the pleasant and cordial refreshments which their languid situation required, their rations of raw beef were thrown on a table, there lying for hours together for the poor sick soldiers to divide and

dress for themselves as they could; and, what was still more deplorable in this militia-murdering hospital, a young man of eighteen years of age, who had been studying medicine only a few months and hardly knew how to put up the simplest prescription, much less to prescribe in the absence of the surgeon, was appointed surgeon's mate.

With such mismanagement, what wonder that so many of our valuable citizens sunk under their complaints, and where is the wonder that they should have exclaimed, with tears in their eyes, "Had we but died on the field of battle, fighting for liberty and our country, we should have gloried in such a death; but to be brought here to die like sheep, it is insupportable!"

* * * * * * *

Dr James Ewell was born on the family estate at Belle Air, Prince William county, Va., February 16, 1773. His father, Col Jesse Ewell, was a classmate of Thomas Jefferson at William and Mary college, and colonel of a Virginia regiment of militia in the Revolutionary war. He had nineteen children, of whom eleven reached maturity, James being his third son.

Dr Ewell studied medicine with his uncle, Dr James Craik, in Alexandria, Va. (the family physician of George Washington), and subsequently with Dr Stevenson in Baltimore. He then concluded his medical studies by attending the lectures at the University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia), under Dr Rush and Dr Benjamin S. Barton. He married, December 2, 1791, Margaret McIntosh Robertson, daughter of Dr Andrew Robertson, of Lancaster county, Va. He afterwards bought a farm near by, practicing his profession in the surrounding country. Subsequently he removed to Dumfries, and in 1801 he visited Washington, residing at the White House as a guest of President Jefferson, who advised him to settle at Savannah, giving him letters of introduction to his friends in that city. He remained at Savannah until 1809, when he settled in Washington, opening his office at the northeast corner of First and A streets southeast.

In 1807 he compiled the Planters' and Mariners' Medical Companion, dedicated to Thomas Jefferson, President of the United States, which was published at Philadelphia. Of this work ten editions were issued. The tenth edition, printed in 1848, contained his portrait. The seventh edition was published at Washington, copyrighted by his daughters, Cordelia B. Ewell and Olivia F. Ewell, as proprietors. In the third edition (Philadelphia, 1817) he inserted, under the heading of "Bilious Fevers," his celebrated article on the "Capture of Washington."

This work, entitled "The Medical Companion," after the first edition, received the highest commendations from the most distinguished medical authorities in the United States, such as Drs W. Shippen, B. S. Barton, J. Woodhouse, J. B. Davidge, J. Shaw, David Ramsay, C. Mackenzie, A. Barron, N. Chapman, C. Caldwell, etc. It was also warmly indorsed by the New York Medical Repository.

Thomas Jefferson, in accepting the dedication of the book, speaks of Dr Ewell's father as his bosom friend.

The biographer, Rev Mason L Weems, married his sister Caroline. Meeting with some financial reverses, Dr Ewell left Washington in 1830 and removed to New Orleans, where he practiced until his death, of cholera. He died in his sixtieth year, November 2, 1832, at Covington, Lake Pontchartrain.

Dr Ewell had four children. The two sons died in infancy, while one daughter became Mrs Olivia F. Martindale, of Sandy Hill, N. Y., and the other Mrs Cordelia B. Kingman, of Washington, D. C. His widow died August 26, 1842, at her daughter's (Mrs Martindale's) home.

According to Col James A. Tait, of this city, who was born here on the day the British entered the city, Dr Ewell was of medium height, somewhat corpulent, of distinguished appearance, had a florid complexion, with large, expressive blue eyes, walked very erect, and had a genial smile for every one. He was universally beloved, and his medical practice extended all over this District.

M. I. Weller.

The Military and Private Secretaries of George Washington

By Mary S. Beall

Thereupon answered John Alden, but looked not up from his writing:
"Truly the breath of the Lord hath slackened the speed of the bullet;
He in his mercy preserved you to be our shield and our weapon!"

Longfellow.

That Washington ever rehearsed his deeds of daring and hairbreadth escapes to his secretaries after the manner of the doughty Puritan captain would not find credence for a moment, but that his secretaries may often have echoed in thought the sentiments expressed by John Alden is pleasantly shown by scores of letters preserved in the "Washington Correspondence" at the Department of State.

Reared in habits of industry and accustomed to so systematize his work that every detail received its just share of consideration, and believing, to use his own words, that "idleness is disreputable under any circumstances, productive of no good, even when unaccompanied by vicious habits," a large proportion of Washington's military, official, and private correspondence is in his own careful penmanship. Throughout the busy and harassing period of the French and Indian war we find month after month and year after year size-rolls, necessary returns, plans and specifications of forts, arrangement of troops during certain long marches, and other military data all written out by himself, with never a blot and seldom an erasure and in a hand as easy to read as print.

In 1755, however, while for a time he commanded the colonial forces that were building forts, opening roads, and holding in check the French and Indians upon the western frontier of Virginia, he wrote to Governor Dinwiddie from Winchester, October 13:

"I have appointed Captain George Mercer (whose Seniority entitled him to it) my aid-de-camp; and Mr. Kirkpatrick, of Alexandria, my Secretary: a young man bred to Business, of good Character, well-recommended, and a person whose Abilities I had not the least doubt of."

Mr Kirkpatrick's appointment, however, may have been several months earlier, for on the 19th of August, 1755, he writes to Washington from Williamsburg, acknowledging the receipt of a letter by express and adding:

"By this Muddy Mortall I thought it incumbent to advise you, that I shall be detain'd a Couple of days longer in town, being obliged to leave a Copy of all Accounts as they now have been examined, & Stand stated in Your Book, so that the next Committee will have easy work with you."

A year later we find him writing to his chief from—

"Falmouth, 25 *August*, 1756.

* * * "On Friday evening had the pleasure of receiving yours, and agreeable to your desire copied the Governour's, Deliver'd it and woud have Shown it to the Speaker, had he not left Town that forenoon. * * * You woud learn by Capt. Cox that All your Accts. were pass'd & approved, & that transcribing the whole transactions woud detain me 2 or 3 days after him."

In 1757 he had left the army and resumed his business of shipping merchant in Alexandria, and on the 19th of June writes:

"Alexandria 19*th June* 1757.

"Dear Sir, I share in the anxiety and concern that you must undoubtedly undergo in the present melancholy prospect and very warmly wish a happy issue. Should my service be requisite in any shape at this juncture, I shall be glad to know it and will immediately obey with the greatest chearfulness in whatever you are pleased to command."

Washington ordered many of the army supplies through him, and in a communication of the 21st of July following, concerning ammunition and artillery stores, after wishing Washington "Every Happiness this Life can afford, or the next can Bestow," he adds:

"P. S. I shall be glad allways to be employed in any thing You have occasion for, this way."

In October, 1757, he writes: "If at any time you desire my assistance, here or elsewhere, before you go down to Williamsbg. I am obedient to your command—and beg you wou'd use me, without ceremony, in any thing I can serve you."

The next year he determines to visit his native country, and writes to acquaint Washington with his contemplated trip and tell where to direct future letters:

"ALEXANDRIA *3d September* 1758.

* * * "A letter will find its way to me—at Kirkcudbright—the County Town of Galloway in the South of Scotland—from whence Doctr. Craik and I derive the *honour* of our Births.—May Providence in a Peculiar manner protect You in every point of Your life and Crown Your Troubles with Content & Honour."

Washington replied promptly, for on the 14th of the same month John Kirkpatrick "snatches a moment before starting" to acknowledge a letter, say good-bye, and beg for a continuance of the correspondence:

"ALEXANDRIA, *14th September*, 1758.

* * * "I am touch'd with sincere grief to leave You and a few Friends, whose Intimacy & Friendship have attach'd me with ties of the warmest Affection—and nothing wou'd make it tolerable without the hopes of Returning, and the pleasure of hearing of my Friends' happiness when Absent—persist then Dear Sir, in kind Offices of Communica-

tion, by all opportunitys—for nothing will afford me more real Delight—or confer greater Honour."

No matter what the main object of his letters, he always found space to give all the news and often much of the gossip of the neighborhood. During the Revolution he was a patriot and always strongly attached to Washington.

After Washington's marriage, when the Custis children began to need the services of a tutor, we find the name of Walter Magowan, of Maryland occurring in his *Ledger* and *Diary*, and there is reason to believe that Magowan acted also in the capacity of secretary, but documentary evidence is not at hand to prove this surmise. However, it is matter of record that he did copying and was paid extra therefor. In Ledger A his account runs from October 9, 1762, to March, 1768, the date of its settlement. In Ledger C he appears as—

"The Rev'd Mr. Magowan, Dr.

"1773, Jan'y 6. To 12 Tickets in the Delaware Lottery, belonging to Lord Sterl'g Numb'd from 5264 to 5275 Inclus'e, *@* 10 doll'rs ea. & dispos'd of by you pr. Letter.... £36 0 0

"Cr.

"1775, Jan'y. By your order on Mr. Hectr. Ross for 120 Dollars..... £36 0 0"

The Rev'd Mr Magowan apologizes in this letter for his delay in settling this account and signs himself "Sir, your obliged h'ble serv't."

Though Washington's aids-de-camp in the discharge of their office attended to many clerical duties, this paper will treat only of those who appear squarely on the records under the title of *secretary*, and Joseph Reed has the honor of being the first "military secretary to the commander-in-chief," the following item being included in Washington's general orders for the current date:

"HEADQUARTERS, CAMBRIDGE, *July 4th*, 1775.

* * * * * * *

"Joseph Reed Esqr. is appointed Secretary to the General and he is in future to be consider'd and regarded as such."

Joseph Reed, the son of Andrew Reed and Theodosia Bowes, was born at Trenton, New Jersey, on the 27th of August, 1741. His education, begun at the Philadelphia academy, was continued at Princeton college, where, in 1757, he took his bachelor's degree at the early age of 16, delivering an original Latin oration at the commencement exercises. After studying law and being admitted to practice, he went to England to complete his legal studies in the Middle Temple, London. His marriage with Esther De Berdt, only daughter of Dennis De Berdt, colonial agent for Massachusetts, allied him with some influential English families. Returning to this country in 1770, he settled in Philadelphia and began the practice of the law.

Already the colonies were beginning to chafe under the injustice and short-sighted policy of the mother country. Reed, taking an active part in politics, began, through his English connections, an earnest, fearless correspondence with Lord Dartmouth, the colonial secretary, giving the British ministry timely warning of what the end must be should the growing dissatisfaction in the American colonies lead to open revolt and an armed resistance. In 1774 he was elected member of the committee of correspondence, and president of the first Pennsylvania convention in January of 1775. In the following May, while a delegate to the First Continental Congress, began probably that acquaintance with Washington, then a delegate from Virginia, which led to Reed's being selected for secretary by the latter when he was made commander-in-chief. When a friend remonstrated with Reed on the step he had taken in accepting this position, he replied: "I have no inclination to be hanged for half treason. When a subject draws his sword

against his prince he must cut his way through if he means afterwards to sit down in safety. I have taken too active a part in what may be called the civil part of opposition to renounce without disgrace the public cause when it seems to lead to danger, and have a most sovereign contempt for the man who can plan measures he has not the spirit to execute."

The books and accounts opened by him in his capacity of secretary bear witness to his neatness and trained ability, while Washington's letters to him during his frequent enforced absence from camp show how great was the commander's reliance on the good judgment and scholarly acquirements of his chosen secretary. The first letter in point is written from the camp at Cambridge, under date of November 20, 1775, and is as follows:

"Dear Sir: The hint contained in the last of your letters respecting your continuance in my family, in other words, your wish that I could dispense with it, gives me pain. You already, my dear Sir, knew my sentiments on this matter; you cannot but be sensible of your importance to me; at the same time I shall again repeat, what I have observed to you before, that I can never think of promoting my convenience at the expense of your interest and inclination. * * * My mind is now fully disclosed to you, with this assurance sincerely and affectionately accompanying it, that whilst you are disposed to continue with me, I shall think myself too fortunate and happy to wish for a change."

Again, on the 28th of the same month, he writes:

"Dear Sir: I can truly assure you that I miss you exceedingly, and if an express declaration be wanting to hasten your return, I make it most heartily and with some pleasure. * * * What can your brethren of the law mean, by saying your perquisites, as Secretary, must be considerable? I am sure they have not amounted to one farthing."

The last extract on this subject is written under date of December 15:

"With respect to what you have said of yourself and situation, to what I have before said on this subject, I can only add, that whilst you leave the door open to my expectation of your return, I shall not think of supplying your place—if ultimately, you resolve against coming, I should be glad to know it, as soon as you have determined upon it."

The earliest letter that has been preserved of Reed to Washington is written from Philadelphia, whither he had been sent on business connected with the army. Washington already had recommended him for adjutant general in the Continental service, and this is the proposition to which he refers:

"Philadelphia *March* 3 1776.

"My Dear General, I have not been favoured with any Thing from you since my two last but that never makes any Difference in my Writing as your Claims of Friendship & Gratitude upon me are superior to all other. * * * The Congress have acceded to the Proposition respecting myself so that unless some new Event unforeseen & very important should happen I shall be with you this Summer. I must beg your Indulgence till I can get my Family into some convenient Situation & settle my Affairs—In the mean Time I am forwarding your Camp Equipage which I have extended in many small particulars beyond your Order."

Four days later he writes:

"Philad. *March* 7, 1776.

"My Dear General,

* * * * * * *

"I have taken a House in the Country to which I propose soon to remove my Family & am preparing what is necessary for the Summer. * * * I expect your Tents to be finished this Week. * * *

"Adieu my dear General, should there be any Action or Enterprize God grant it may be a glorious one to you & a happy one for our Country."

On the 15th he writes to congratulate his "dear General" on a prosperous turn in events:

"PHILAD. *March* 15, 1776.

"MY DEAR GENERAL. This Morning your Express arrived with an Account of the interesting Events which have taken Place since this Month began. I beg Leave to congratulate you on Appearances so favourable to the Interests of our Country & your own Character. Not that in my Opinion it was the least clouded by your Inactivity as the Causes were well known, but it is certain that Enterprize & Success give a Brilliance & Lustre which cannot be unacceptable to a good Mind."

An interesting letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, marks the end of his secretaryship and bears witness to his strict sense of justice:

"The Hon'ble Congress having been pleased some Time ago to make an Addition to the Pay of the General's Secretary, upon an Expectation that I should continue in that Appointment, I think it my Duty to acquaint you, that agreeable thereto, I repaired to New York, where I found a Gentleman of Character & Abilities performing the Services of that Office with Satisfaction to the General.

"As my first acceptance of the Office was purely accidental, & occasioned by publick Motives, the Necessity of my Continuance seemed now to cease & induced me to request the General to excuse my farther Attendance, which he was so obliging as to comply with. This & Engagements both of a publick & Private Nature in this Province, & these only, were my Reasons for declining the Service, at the same Time I assured the General that if in the Course of Business my small Abilities could be of any Use, I would on the shortest Notice most chearfully devote myself to it again.

"Having been absent from the General for some Time I considered the Pay of the Office most properly due to those Gentlemen who did the Duty during that Absence. I accordingly with the General's Approbation divided it between them."

As adjutant general he met the messenger of Lord Howe when the latter sent a letter to *George Washington, Esqr.*, and refused to transmit it to the commander-in-chief, because it was not properly addressed.

Reed's active military career began with the series of engagements on Long Island, in August, 1776, while by his knowledge of the country around Trenton and Princeton, gained as a boy and during his college days, he aided materially in the success of the enterprise of that memorable Christmas night and the following January. As an acknowledgment of his services during this campaign, Congress raised him to the rank of brigadier general May 12, 1777. About the same time the executive council of Pennsylvania appointed him to fill the office of chief justice of that State. He declined both appointments, however, preferring to keep himself free to act as a volunteer whenever his services should be needed, and it was in this capacity he took part in the battles of Brandywine, Whitemarsh, Germantown, and Monmouth.

Man's necessity is often the devil's opportunity, and it was when Reed was disheartened by his ineffectual appeals to Congress in behalf of our half-clothed and half-starved soldiers, for whose sake he had well nigh impoverished himself, that one of the fiercest temptations of his life assailed him. Ten thousand pounds sterling and any office in the king's gift were offered him if he would renounce the American cause and use his influence to bring about a reconciliation between the two countries. Without a moment's hesitation Reed proudly answered, "I am not worth purchasing, but, such as I am, the king of Great Britain is not rich enough to buy me!"

In November of 1778 he was unanimously elected president of the State of Pennsylvania, signed the articles of confederation the same year, and in 1781 was active in suppressing the revolt of the Pennsylvania line. During his presidency he aided in founding the University of Pennsylvania and used his influence for the gradual abolition of slavery and the annulling of the proprietary powers vested in the Penn family. At the expiration of his term of office, in 1781, he resumed his practice, and died on the 8th of March, 1785. He was buried beside his wife in the old Presbyterian burying-ground at the corner of Fifth and Arch streets, Philadelphia.

Reed was succeeded on the 16th of May, 1776, by Robert Hanson Harrison, who served until the 25th of March, 1781. Harrison was born in Maryland in 1745, and was educated for the law. As Washington's secretary he ranked as lieutenant colonel. Lund Washington appears to have been the intermediary in this appointment, for it was through him that the proposition was made to Harrison, and it was Lund who informed the general of Harrison's gratified acceptance.

"Mount Vernon, *Octr. 5th*, 1775.

"Dear Sir:

* * * * * * *

"I cannot with certainty inform you by this letter whether Mr. Harrison will accept the offer you make him or not; but I can hardly think he or any other American would refuse it." * * *

"Mount Vernon, *October 15th*, 1775.

"Dear Sir: This letter I expect will be delivered to you by Mr. Harrison, who thankfully accepted your invitation."

In 1777 Harrison was appointed by Congress a member of the board of war, but declined, preferring to remain on the staff of the commander-in-chief. On the 10th of March, 1781, he was appointed chief justice of Maryland and quitted

the army on the 25th of the same month. Writing to Washington from Annapolis on the 21st of October following, he says:

"Be pleased to accept my sincere congratulations, My Dear Sir, upon the surrender of Lord Cornwallis.—They are the Offerings of a Heart very warmly attached to Your Excellency & most zealously so to the interest & happiness of the States. This Event, for the wisdom & vigor of the measures leading to it, it is the Voice of all here, is as honorable to You & the Allied Army as it is advanceive of & interesting to the Common Cause."

In 1789 he was appointed judge of the United States Supreme Court, but declined this appointment also. He died in Charles county, Maryland, on the 21st of April, 1790.

On the 21st of June, 1776, Alexander Contee Hanson was appointed assistant secretary and acted in that capacity for several months, until prevented by ill health from rendering further military service, though he continued to enjoy the friendship and confidence of Washington. Hanson was born on the 22d of October, 1749; was a delegate to the convention that ratified the Constitution, in 1788. He declined a United States judgeship, but was chancellor of Maryland from 1789 until his death, in Annapolis, in 1806. Under the title of the *Hanson pamphlets* the Maryland Historical Society has preserved some of his vigorous writings on the political topics of his day.

Next in order of appointment was Colonel Tench Tilghman, who is always known as Washington's *volunteer secretary*. He was born on Christmas day of 1744, at Fausley, his father's plantation, on Fausley creek, a branch of the Saint Michaels river, in Talbot county, Maryland. His father was James Tilghman, a lawyer by profession, who removed from Chestertown, Maryland, to Philadelphia in 1762 and held various posts of trust and honor under the colonial government of Pennsylvania. His mother was the daughter of Tench Francis, senior, an eminent lawyer and attorney-

general of the province of Pennsylvania. Tench Tilghman, one of a family of twelve children and eldest of six boys, after receiving a thorough education under the best masters, entered into business with his uncle, Tench Francis, junior, in Philadelphia. So prosperous was this commercial enterprise that ere the first battle of the Revolution had been fought the partners had secured a modest competency, but the beginning of hostilities was the end of Tilghman's mercantile pursuits. He says:

"Upon the breaking out of the troubles, I came to a determination to share the fate of my country; and that I might not be merely a spectator, I made as hasty a close, as I possibly could, of my commercial affairs, making it a point to collect and deposit in safe hands, as much as would, when times and circumstances would permit, enable me to discharge my European debts, which indeed were all I had."

Fired by the news from Lexington and Concord, the young men of Philadelphia began to fit themselves for what each felt must come sooner or later. Military companies were formed, officers chosen. Of the former, the most conspicuous was *The Ladies' Light Infantry*, called in derision "The Silk Stocking Brigade," of which Tench Tilghman was lieutenant. When this company was reorganized, in 1776, to form part of the Pennsylvania quota, Tilghman was chosen captain, and it became part of the famous *Flying Camp*. During the summer and fall of 1775 he held the important positions of secretary, treasurer, and paymaster to the commission appointed by Congress to treat with the Six Nations. In August of 1776 he became a member of Washington's military family, and from that time until the surrender of Yorktown he was seldom absent from the camp of the commander-in-chief. He shared the fatigues and discouragements of that memorable retreat through the Jerseys; the daring and danger of that midnight crossing of the Delaware; the eclat of the victories at Trenton and Princeton; the sorrow of the defeat at Brandywine and the check at

Germantown; the discomforts, hardships, and privations of the winter quarters at Valley Forge; the masterly plans by which the forces were concentrated at Yorktown, and the glories of its final surrender, which virtually ended the war. To Colonel Tilghman Washington intrusted the pleasing duty of bearing his official communication to Congress of this proud event, making this flattering allusion to his messenger:

"Hon'e Thomas McKean, President of Congress:

"Sir, * * * Colo. Tilghman, one of my aides-de-camp, will have the honor to deliver these dispatches to your excellency. He will be able to inform you of every minute circumstance which is not particularly mentioned in my letter. His merits, which are too well known to need my observations at this time, have gained my particular attention, and I could wish that they may be honored by the notice of your excellency and Congress."

This kindly recommendation by the chief was honored by Congress, who ordered that "a horse with his caparisons and a sword be presented by the board of war to Lieut't Colo. Tilghman." He was the prototype of the modern "our special correspondent at the seat of war," sending by express to Congress, at the special request of certain members, a daily letter giving the latest news of our own and the enemy's movements. Concerning his rank of lieutenant colonel an extract from a letter of Washington's to Hon. John Sullivan, delegate to Congress, urging that body to settle definitely the rank of certain officers in the Continental service, will be interesting as showing certain commendable traits in Tilghman's character. Washington writes:

"I also wish, though it is more a matter of private than public consideration, that the business could be taken up on account of Mr. Tilghman, whose appointment seems to depend on it: for if there are men in the army deserving

of the commission proposed for him, he is one of them. This gentleman came out a captain of one of the light infantry companies of Philadelphia, and served in the Flying Camp in 1776. In August of the same year he joined my family, and has been in every action in which the main army was concerned. He has been a zealous servant and slave to the public, and a faithful assistant to me for nearly five years, a great part of which time he refused to receive pay. Honor and gratitude interest me in his favor, and make me solicitous to obtain his commission. His modesty and love of concord placed the date of his expected commission at the first of April, 1777, because he would not take rank of Hamilton and Meade, who were declared aides in order (which he did not choose to be), before that period, although he had joined my family and done all the duties of one from the first of September preceding."

That Tilghman, like many others, suffered from the envy and jealousy of some with whom he came in contact, who tried, though ineffectually, to prejudice the chief against him, may be gathered from a letter written to his brother, who wished to gain permission to go abroad:

"Head Quarters, New Windsor,
"12*th June*, 1781.

"My Dear William

* * * * * * *

"It gives me pain to tell you that I cannot, without subjecting myself to censure, interfere in the least, in procuring your recommendations to go to England by the way of France or Holland. I am placed in as delicate a situation as it is possible for a Man to be. I am, from my station, Master of the most valuable Secrets of the Cabinet and the Field, and it might give cause of umbrage and suspicion were I, at this critical Moment, to interest myself in procuring the passage of a Brother to England. Tho' I may know his intentions are perfectly innocent, others may not or will

not. You cannot conceive how many attempts have been made, some time ago, to alarm the General's suspicions, as to my being near his person—Thank God—He has been too generous to listen to them—and the many proofs I have given of my attachment have silenced every malignant whisper of the kind. As I never have given the least handle for censure, I am determined never to do it."

When Washington surrendered his commission as commander-in-chief, at Annapolis, on the 23d of December, 1783, Tilghman was beside him, and, following the example of his chief, resigned his commission and became once more a private citizen. Locating at Baltimore, he again engaged in mercantile pursuits, at first on his own account, but soon after in connection with Mr Robert Morris. In June of 1783 he had married his cousin, Anna Maria Tilghman, daughter of Matthew Tilghman, of Bay Side, Talbot county, Maryland. Two daughters were born to them, but the seeds of a fatal disease had been sown in the father's constitution during that terrible winter at Valley Forge, and on the 18th of April, 1786, in the forty-second year of his age, he passed away and was buried in the plot of ground, no longer used for the interment of the dead, on Lombard street between Green and Paca streets, Baltimore.

The second aid-de-camp to be appointed assistant secretary was James McHenry, of Pennsylvania. He entered the army as surgeon of the 5th Pennsylvania battalion on the 10th of August, 1776, but was taken prisoner at Fort Washington on the 16th of November following. He remained a prisoner of war on parole until exchanged on the 5th of March, 1778. Two months later, on the 15th of May, he was chosen assistant secretary by the commander-in-chief. That he longed for a more active participation in the war is shown by the following letter to his commander:

"Head Quarters, *18th July*, 1780.

"Sir: I would beg leave to mention to your Excellency, a matter, in which I feel too much to be longer without

laying it before you. The approaching campaign opening an interesting field, makes me desirous to appear, in a more military character, than that I now hold. I have also had before me for some time past, a prospect of visiting Europe; and especially those places where our interest is most cherished. And as my present character of Secretary, is not in the same estimation, there, as with us, I would therefore request your Excellency that I may be considered as a volunteer. Hitherto, I have acted without pay, and it is my intention to receive none in future, unless some alteration in my circumstances renders it necessary. If I receive your permission, to serve as a volunteer, or accept such a station in the army as may place me wholly, in a military light, I shall be happy, because, in it, I combine, with what I owe myself, that duty proper to my country.

"I have the honor to be with the utmost respect, Your Excellency's

"Most obt. & hble servt.

"JAMES MCHENRY.

"His Excellency
General WASHINGTON."

On the 30th of October, 1780, he was transferred from Washington's to Lafayette's staff, serving as aid-de-camp, with the rank of lieutenant colonel, until the 22d of December, 1781. From 1783 to 1786 he was a member of the Continental Congress, and in 1787 was one of the framers of the United States Constitution. On the 27th of January, 1796, he was again associated with Washington, succeeding Timothy Pickering as Secretary of War and holding that office until the 13th of May, 1800. His death occurred on the 8th of May, 1816.

The last aid-de-camp to be appointed secretary was Jonathan Trumbull, *junior*, son of Connecticut's famous war governor, whose Christian name is said to have furnished the sobriquet for the United States (Brother Jonathan). Jonathan, junior, was born in Lebanon, Connecticut,

on the 26th of March, 1740. He was a graduate of Harvard and a prominent member of the state legislature for several sessions prior to and at the commencement of the Revolution. During the first three years of the war he was paymaster to the northern department of the army, and on the 8th of June, 1781, was appointed aid-de-camp and secretary to the commander-in-chief. When the position was tendered to him he wrote the following reply:

"LEBANON 27*th April* 1781.

"DEAR GENERAL Returng. Yesterday from a Journey Eastward as far as Boston on which I had been employed for a Fortnight, I found your Excellency's Letter of the 16th waiting for me, with a Proposal for my joining your Family in the Capacity of a Secretary. * * * The Idea is so new & unexpected—and my other Engagements (exclusive of my Family, private Business & domestic Concerns) are such as will render it very difficult for me to make a Compliance to your Excellency's Request—tho' at the same Time I have to confess that it will give me great Pain, if on full Consideration, I shall find myself obliged to make a Refusal; as my Inclination would lead me to fulfill your every Wish—& be assured Sir!—my Ambition would be highly gratified by so near an Admission to the Person & Confidence of General Washington. * * * On the whole I must beg your Excellency's Permission for a short Time to consult my own mind & those of my Friends on this subject—& in the meantime suffer me to suggest that your Excellency will be pleased to turn your Mind on some other Person who may eventually be called to this Service—some others I can readily conceive may be found who will perform it with greater Abilities but no one I dare say will accept whose chearfull Readiness & utmost Endeavours to fulfill your Excellency's Wishes will be greater (if Circumstances shall permit) than mine."

On the 20th of July, 1783, he writes from Newburgh to Washington, who is absent for a time from head-quarters,

giving him the news up to date, and adding the following postscript:

"P. S. Mrs. Washington not writing, desires me to inform [you] that she is as well as when your Excellency left her."

His office terminated with the disbanding of the army, 23d of December, 1783. Subsequently he was member of Congress from 1789 to 1795, Speaker of the House during the last four years of the time, United States Senator from 1795 to 1796, lieutenant governor of Connecticut from 1796 to 1798, governor from 1798 to 1809, and died on the 7th of August of that year.

Of the seven military secretaries of the revolutionary period, Richard Varick alone was not an aid-de-camp, but bore the distinctive title of *recording secretary*. He was born in Hackensack, New Jersey, on the 25th of March, 1753, and his family name was originally Van Varick. At the beginning of hostilities he was a practicing lawyer in New York city. Entering the army a captain in McDougall's regiment, he was soon after appointed military secretary to General Schuyler, then in command of the northern division. Later he was made deputy mustermaster general, with the rank of lieutenant-colonel, and served in that capacity until after the surrender of Burgoyne, in October, 1777, when he was appointed inspector general at West Point and aid-de-camp to Benedict Arnold, whose soldierly qualities won his admiration and whose treason came near driving Varick insane. Summarily dismissed from the army by Congress because of his "unhappy connexion with the guilty Arnold," he was afterward, through the interposition of friends, granted the benefit of a court of inquiry. Pending his trial he wrote to Washington from—

"Robinson's House, *October 24th*, 1780.

* * * * * * *

"As it may be of essential Importance to Me, to be furnished with the Testimony of one of the Gentlemen of Your

Excellency's Family, with respect to my Conduct, on and after the 25th September, & whether the Papers taken on André were in my Hand Writing; I have by this conveyance requested Colo. Hamilton to be so obliging as to send me his by the first Opportunity Least those from Meade & Harrison should not reach me in Season or not be broad enough, with respect to the Papers taken on André."

Exonerated from all complicity in Arnold's infamous scheme, he soon after received a wonderful proof of Washington's thorough belief in his innocence, the chief tendering him the position of recording secretary. His letter of acceptance bears date Albany, May 25, 1781, and is in part as follows:

"I do therefore take this Opportunity of accepting the singular Trust so politely proferred to me & shall deem myself happy if my Services & Attention on this Occasion may be such as to merit Approbation & prove the Propriety of Your Excellency's Choice. I shall set out for Camp in a very few Days, where I can be better informed how soon the Papers will be ready for Transcription & take Measures accordingly. * * * When I was at Poughkeepsie I mentioned the Matter to Governor Clinton & requested his Opinion as to the Practicability of getting proper Assistance at that Place, he informed me that he could recommend at least two Persons who are capable & to be confided in, I believe I shall be able to engage the others in this Place or its Vicinity; on the proper Characters I will advise with Gen'l Schuyler."

From a letter to Jonathan Trumbull, junior, we find that he began his work on the 7th of June, 1781. He adds:

"The Terms the Gen'l proposed were to be on an equal footing with Yourself with Respect to pay & subsistence Money. I wish this to [be] specified, as also that the Pay to Myself & Writers should be in Specie or its equivalent.

Let it be mentioned in particular about the Writers as His Excellency's promise, they now hold me in the Gap. * * * The Room in which the Office is kept ought to be paid for by the Public—my Lodging is an Affair of my own. * * * I wish farther to be empowered to give one of the Writers 60 Dollars pr. Mo. as they draw no Rations or any Thing else & I wish one, besides his Ordinary Duty at Office Hours, in the Absence of the Other to Assist me in Examining the Papers, this will justly deserve some Compensation."

By the 19th of July he was ready to report progress to Washington:

"Poughkeepsie *July 19th* 1781.

"Dear Sir I have the Honor of informing Your Excellency that I arrived at this Place on Saturday the 7th. * * * By numbering and digesting into Classes the Copies of Letters & Orders in 1775 & 1776 I found that some essential ones were wanting. * * * I therefore thought it expedient before I employed the Writers, to sort & digest the whole of the Original Letters & Copies for 1775, 1776, 1777 & 1778 & All the other Papers, to find them & such other Copies as thro' hurry were misfiled, that I might not be deemed guilty of Blunders which it was in my Power, by timely Precautions, to prevent. * * * The Variety of Movements & Hands which the Papers have gone thro', have caused many of them to be improperly packed together, so as to require the most exact & unintermitted Attention as well as some Time, to indorse, arrange & digest them in proper Order.

"I flatter myself that this consideration alone, independent of the above Embarrassment, will exculpate me in Your Opinion of a seeming Delay in setting the Writers to Business.—I am, however, happy to inform Your Excellency that I now have the whole in such a State of Forwardness as to enable two Writers to commence in two Days & a third in five Days thereafter. * * * Least any Concern

may take Place with Respect to the Security of the public Papers, I think it proper to inform Your Excellency that I have taken Quarters at Doctor Peter Tappen's an honest Patriot & Bro. in Law to the Genl. where my Charge is perfectly secure & rendered (if possible) more so by its Propinquity to the Governor's Quarters, who is furnished with a Guard. But without this I should not apprehend the least Danger, as the Inhabitants are generally Whigs.

"I heartily wish You success in Your Military Operations & am with the most perfect Respect & Esteem Your Excellency's Most Obliged Obedt. Servt.

"Richard Varick

"His Excellency Genl. Washington."

In February of 1782 he had a grievance to state:

"Poughkeepsie *Feby.* 7, 1782

*. * * * * * *

"Since my Letter of the 14th Mr. Hughes, one of the Writers who, tho capable, had been frequently too inattentive to the Manner of executing his Duty, took my frequent Reproofs & Directions in Dudgeon & quitted the Service, after having compleated two Volumes (from the 1st Jany. to the 10th Septr. 1779.)—This was the ostensible business; but the real one was a Disappointment in his Wishes and Expectations to make a *Jobb* of the Business."

From his accounts we glean the names of six "writers"—Mr Zacchæus Sickels, Mr Oliver Glean, Mr Myer, Mr Dunscomb, Mr Hughes (the last three were discharged), and Mr George Taylor, Jr. His labors were ended on the 18th of August, 1783, when the books and papers of his excellency were packed up, ready to be returned, and Varick's appointment terminated on the 23d of December following. Subsequently he was recorder of the city of New York, speaker of the house of assembly, attorney general of the State, mayor of the city, and, with Samuel Jones, was appointed to revise the State laws. He was one of the founders of the

American Bible Society, and on the resignation of John Jay was elected its president. He is described as of imposing presence, being over six feet in height. He died in Jersey City on the 30th of July, 1831.

Passing from the stirring incidents of the camp and following Washington to his dearly loved Mount Vernon, we begin to gather from his diary and correspondence the names and characteristics of a succession of private secretaries. William Shaw, of Virginia, writing to Washington from Dumfries on the 4th of July, 1785, says he hopes his "Excellency will not think £50 sterling per ann. with Bed, Board, Washing, &ca. too great a Demand, as I Can assure you, I have refus'd much greater offers but Prefer Staying with you for a less Sum, as it will entitle me to be in Better Company, & a Genteeler line of Life." He signs himself "Believe me to be with respect Your Excellency's Mo. Obed't Servt.," and adds a postscript: "Please let the Ladies know that there are Black & White Sattin Shoes here, & if they Wish any to Send their Measure, & I shall do myself the Pleasure of getting them." On the 12th of the same month he writes to say that he is sorry the sum he mentioned is thought too much, but will come for whatever Washington thinks his services are worth. Looking through the General's diary, one feels that in his dealings with young Shaw he kept in view the old adage that "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy," for Mr Shaw goes to the races, rides after the hounds, and attends many an "assembly" and "dance" in Alexandria. Two entries in Washington's diary fix the date of his coming and going with accuracy:

"Tuesday 26th July 1785 * * * With Mrs. Washington, Miss Bassett and the two children I dined at Mr. Lund Washington's.—On my return, found Mr. Will Shaw (whom I had engaged to live with me as a Book keeper, Secretary, &ca.) here."

"August, Sunday 13, 1786 * * * Mr. Shaw quitted this family to day."

In 1786 Washington began corresponding with friends in reference to a suitable tutor for his adopted children—George Washington Parke and Miss Nellie Parke Custis—and through General Lincoln hears of Tobias Lear. A letter under date of February 6, 1786, from Washington to Lincoln defines the duties and privileges of the person wanted with accuracy:

"MOUNT VERNON, 6 *February*, 1786.

"MY DEAR SIR * * * Mr. Lear, or any other who may come into my family in the blended characters of preceptor to the children, and clerk or private secretary to me, will sit at my table, will live as I live, will mix with the company who resort to the house, and will be treated in every respect with civility and proper attention. He will have his washing done in the family, and may have his linen and stockings mended by the maids of it. The duties which will be required of him, are generally such as appertain to the offices above mentioned. The first will be very trifling, till the children are a little more advanced: and the other will be equally so, as my correspondences decline (which I am endeavouring to effect) and after my accounts and other old matters are brought up. To descend more minutely into his duties I am unable, because occasional matters may call for particular services; but nothing derogatory will be asked or expected. After this explanation of my wants, I request that Mr. Lear will mention the annual sum he will expect for these services, and I will give him a decided answer by the return of the stages, which now carry the mail and travel quickly. A good hand, as well as proper diction, would be a recommendation on account of fair entries, and for the benefit of the children who will have to copy after it."

On the 7th of May following Lear writes to Washington that General Lincoln has let him see the letter in which Washington accedes to his request for $200 per annum, and adds:

"If I find an opportunity of going by Water I shall embrace it immediately and be with your Excellency in about three weeks, but if an opportunity does not offer in a few days I shall set off by the stages, and very probably be at Mount Vernon soon after you receive this. I am with sentiments of the greatest Respect Your Excellency's most Obed't Hum'e Serv't."

Lear was born in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, September 19th, 1762; graduated from Harvard in 1783, and became Washington's private secretary in 1786. He married, for his second wife, the widow of one of Washington's favorite nephews; was generously remembered in the General's will, and has the distinction of having received his last words. The January [1895] number of the *Spirit of '76* states that "in 1798, when Washington accepted the command of the provisional army, Mr Lear was selected as the military secretary, with the rank of colonel," but official data are not at hand to verify this statement. In 1801 he was consul-general at Saint Domingo; from 1804 to 1812, consul-general at Algiers and a commissioner to conclude a peace with Tripoli. At his death, which occurred in the city of Washington, October 10, 1816, he was an accountant in the War Department.

David Humphreys, born in Derby, Connecticut, in 1752, was aid-de-camp to Washington from 1780 to the end of the war. His name appears in the journals of Congress as follows:

"*Resolved*, That an elegant sword be presented, in the name of the United States in Congress assembled, to Colo. Humphreys, an aid-de-camp of General Washington, to whose care the standards, taken under the capitulation of York, were consigned, as a testimony of their opinion of his fidelity and ability and that the board of war take order therein."

He was an honored guest at Mount Vernon for nearly a

year after the return of its master. Upon the organization of the Federal Government he accompanied Washington to New York and acted as his secretary until 1790. Many letters on file in the Department of State bear his signature, in that capacity. In 1789, while on a mission south to treat with the southern Indians, he writes to the President as follows:

"PETERSBURG *Oct'r 28th* 1789.

"MY DEAR GENERAL * * * I have taken considerable pains to learn how the persons appointed to offices in the several States are considered by their fellow Citizens; & am happy to assure you that the appointments in general have met with almost universal approbation. The selection of Characters to fill the great Departments has afforded entire satisfaction; particularly in the Judiciary I heard it repeatedly said in Halifax, that the Supreme Court would be the first Court in the world in point of respectability. These things cannot but augur well. * * * I will not intrude any longer on your time, than to assure you, that I am with the most unalterable & perfect friendship my dear general &ca

"D. HUMPHREYS.

"To the PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES."

In 1790 he was appointed minister to Portugal, and at the moment of embarking wrote to Washington as follows:

"NEW YORK *September 1st* 1790

"MY DEAR GENERAL In taking leave of you, at the moment of your departure, while I strove in vain to check an impulse which I apprehended betrayed too much weakness, I found the burden on my heart choaked the passage of utterance. In that moment a multitude of ideas crowded into my mind. A long seperation from one's friends & country under an idea of going into a nation where one is a total stranger, however flattering or useful the object may be which occasions it, is, in some respects, like a voluntary exile. * * * As I was unable to say what I wished to

have said, I thought I would take this occasion of writing a line to you, previous to my leaving the Continent, which might remain as a proof of my gratitude for all your kindness, and a pledge of my honest zeal to justify your indulgent sentiments in my behalf, by the execution of my duty in the best manner my abilities will allow. * * * I have kept this letter open untill the moment in which I should be called to embark. The tide & wind now suffer us to sail. No farther delay is permitted. The last act I shall do on shore, previous to my voyage, will be to assure you, that, of all the Admirers of your character or friends to your person, there is no one who feels a more disinterested & inviolable attachment, than, My dear general

"Your sincere friend & Most obliged Servant

"D. Humphreys."

His life was a busy one, filled with military, diplomatic, and literary pursuits. He died in New Haven, February 21, 1818.

William Jackson, born in Cumberland, England, March 9, 1759, but brought as an orphan, at an early age, to this country, was liberally educated in the colonies, and entered the army in 1775. He was in active service until 1780, when he was made prisoner at the capture of Charleston. He gained his title of major while an aid-de-camp to the commander-in-chief. In April, 1787, he wrote to Washington, asking his influence to have him appointed secretary to the federal convention, and on the 17th of September following he wrote:

"Major Jackson, after burning all the loose scraps of paper which belong to the Convention, will this evening wait upon the General with the Journals and other papers which their vote directs to be delivered to His Excellency."

From 1789 to 1793 he was private secretary to the President. In July of 1790, having heard that Mr Otis, secretary

to the Senate, would probably soon resign to take another office, he writes to Washington to bespeak his influence to have him appointed Otis' successor and gives the following reason:

"Several years are past since my affections were given to a Lady in Philadelphia whose name delicacy requires me to leave unconnected with a letter—they were returned and my happiness wanted only the aid of fortune to have been completed. To obtain the consent of friends, whose consent was essential to my happiness, some certainty of income was necessary: but alas, I have not possessed that certainty, and I have hitherto been unhappy. The present object with the assistance of what I might derive from another pursuit, in the recess of Congress, would confirm to me an expectation of happiness dearer to me than all other hopes."

A year later, hearing that the Postmaster General is about to resign, he writes again to Washington and wishes to submit himself as successor, but adds:

"Could I believe, Sir, that your approbation of my wish (should I be so happy as to obtain it) could be construed into an act of partiality towards a person of your family—interesting as the completion of this wish is to my happiness—I would not desire it—No, Sir, I would not consent that, in this only instance, you should be supposed to depart from that impartial justice, which characterises all your actions and has given unlimited confidence to your administration."

In 1795 he married Elizabeth Willing, of Philadelphia, the lady of his choice. The same year, while Washington was deprived of the services of Mr Dandridge because of his severe illness, Jackson wrote to the President:

"[Philadelphia] Pine Street No. 67—

"*August* 25, 1795.

* * * * * * *

"Presuming that in the absence of Mr Dandridge, and under the pressure of public business, you might possibly

have occasion for that kind of assistance which I should be capable of rendering—I beg leave to entreat, if such assistance can be useful, that you will command my best services while you continue on your present visit to Philadelphia.

"As I am waiting the issue of some arrangements before I enter upon my plans of private business, my time is, at present unoccupied.—And my heart, head and hands cannot be more gratefully employed than in a disinterested demonstration of the perfect esteem and affectionate attachment, with which I am, Sir, Your most obliged and faithful servant."

In 1796 Jackson was appointed surveyor of the port of Philadelphia. He was secretary to the Society of the Cincinnati for twenty-eight years and delivered the funeral oration upon Washington in Philadelphia. He died in 1828, his wife surviving him for thirty years.

Bartholomew Dandridge, of Virginia, nephew to Mrs Washington, writes from Baltimore, July 14, 1792, to Colonel Vanhorne, "By order of the President of the United States. I beg to inform you," &c, showing that he had been added to the list of secretaries. In May, 1796, after a severe spell of illness, he writes to the President from Greenbriar Court House:

"In case you do not wish to give me my place in your service, I may endeavour to obtain one somewhere or other. In the last event, I must beg of you to enclose me a certificate of the time I lived with you & of my conduct during that time. As I am sure you will do this with strict justice, it will be serviceable to me. You may obtain many who are in some respects more capable of doing your business, but I can truly say you will not find one who will be more faithful to your interest, according to my ability."

He ends by suggesting that if the President does not need him as a secretary, he should be glad to be employed as an agent for disposing of Washington's lands on the Ohio.

In March of 1797 Washington wrote for Dandridge such a testimonial as he asked the year before. He speaks in high approbation of Dandridge's conduct during the six years he had been a member of his family, refers to the new career opening before the young man, and reminds him, "but I am sure you will never forget that, without virtue & without integrity, the finest talents & the most brilliant accomplishments can never gain the respect or conciliate the esteem of the truly valuable part of mankind."

George Washington Craik, of Virginia, son of Dr James Craik, whom Washington in his will calls "my compatriot in arms, my old and intimate friend," was one of several youths who, bearing the general's name, were in part educated at his expense. A letter is on file in the Department of State, bearing date November 9, 1796, written from Philadelphia, and signed by Craik as secretary to the President, showing that he had been selected to fill the position during Dandridge's illness.

As early as 1785 Washington wrote to Tench Tilghman concerning a Mr Rawlins:

"Mount Vernon *29th Augt* 1785.

"Dear Sir * * * As I seem to be in the habit of giving you trouble, I beg the favor of you to cause the inclosed letter to be delivered to Mr Rawlins—I leave it open for your perusal—my reason for it is, that thereby seeing my wants, you would be so obliging as to give me your opinion of Mr Rawlins with respect to his abilities and diligence as a workman—whether he is reckoned moderate or high, in his charges—and whether there is much call, at this time, for a man of his profession at Baltimore—for on this, I presume, his high or moderate terms will greatly depend."

As Albin Rawlins did not apply for the position until 1798, the first may have been the elder brother to whom he refers in his application. On the 26th of January, 1798,

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writing to Washington from Hanover Court House and offering himself as secretary, he states that General Spotswood had told his (Rawlins') brother that Washington was in need of such a person. He asks $150 per annum, and adds that he can get a recommendation from any gentleman in Hanover or Caroline of his acquaintance, and signs himself, "I am honor'd Sir Y'r Ob't Serv't," but the *honor'd* is added with a caret and is evidently the result of an afterthought. There was some delay in his getting the position, and he seems to have been a young man of "affairs," for he always refers to important private business he should like the time to attend to. He was evidently proud of his penmanship, for he adds a postscript to his last letter, stating, "The letters you received from me were of my own writing." He sets the date of his advent at Mount Vernon as March 20, 1798.

Of the military and private secretaries given above, none but Lear seems to have used his office as a distinctive title, for during Washington's administrations he always signed his official letters, "Tobias Lear, Secretary to the President of the United States."—[*Columbia Historical Society, January* 7, 1895.]

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